

## Claims

We claim:

1. A method for notifying an electronic address of the presence of physical mail in a designated mailbox comprising:
  - detecting at least one piece of mail in the mailbox;
  - mapping the mailbox to the electronic address; and
  - transmitting an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the detecting is performed manually.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the detecting is performed electronically.
6. A method for managing a mailbox adapted to receive physical pieces of mail comprising:
  - electronically detecting the presence or absence of at least one physical piece of mail in the mailbox to generate a detection event; and
  - transmitting the detection event to a predefined electronic address.
7. An apparatus for comprising:
  - at least one mailbox, wherein the mailbox is adapted to receive at least one physical piece of mail;

4 a detecting means associated with the mailbox, wherein the detecting means is  
5 adapted to detect the presence and absence of the at least one physical piece mail in the  
6 mailbox and transmit signals indicating the presence or absence of mail in the mailbox;  
7 and

8 a processing means for receiving the signals from the detecting means.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 7 further comprising a means for transmitting an  
2 electronic notification indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the  
3 mailbox.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the detecting means is electronically activated.

1 10. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the detecting means is manually activated.

1 11. The apparatus of claim 7 further comprising a means for weighing physical pieces  
2 of mail in the mail box. .

1 12. A computer program product for notifying an electronic address of the presence  
2 of physical mail in a designated mailbox comprising:

3 a recording medium;

4 means, recorded on the recording medium, for detecting at least one piece of mail  
5 in the mailbox;

6 means, recorded on the recording medium, for mapping the mailbox to the  
7 electronic address; and

8 means, recorded on the recording medium, for transmitting an electronic  
9 notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the  
10 mailbox.

1 13. The product of claim 12 further comprising means, recorded on the recording  
2 medium, for detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox.

1 14. The product of claim 12 further comprising means, recorded on the recording  
2 medium, for determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the  
3 weight information.

1 15. A computer program product for managing a mailbox comprising:  
2 a recording medium;  
3 means, recorded on the recording medium, for electronically detecting the  
4 presence and absence of at least one physical mail piece in the mailbox to generate a  
5 detection event; and  
6 means, recorded on the recording medium, for transmitting the detection event to  
7 the address.

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